

**RULES
OF
TENNESSEE ATHLETIC COMMISSION**

**CHAPTER 0145-02
PROFESSIONAL BOXING**

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0145-02-.01 APPLICABILITY.

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all professional boxing contests held or scheduled to be held in the state of Tennessee and shall take precedent over any other rules, including but not limited to rules of any sanctioning organization, that are in any way directly or indirectly in conflict with any provision set forth in this chapter, unless the Commission modifies or waives such provision. The Commission may modify or waive any provision hereunder:

- (1) In cases of undue hardship, demonstrable impracticality, or necessity; or
- (2) For the purpose of allowing a bout to be sanctioned by a recognized boxing association, council, or organization.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.02 RING.

- (1) The ring shall not be less than sixteen feet (16') nor more than twenty-four feet (24') square within the ropes. The floor of the ring shall extend not less than sixteen inches (16") nor more than two feet (2') beyond the ropes on all sides of the ring. Such floor shall be padded with a one inch (1") layer of Ensolite (or the equivalent) placed over a one inch (1") base of building board or other suitable material. The padding shall be covered with canvas, duck, or similar material tightly stretched and laced securely in place under the apron.
- (2) The ring platform shall not be more than four feet (4') above the floor of the building, and shall be provided with suitable steps. If the ring platform is not elevated at least three and one-half feet (3 1/2') above the floor of the building, there shall be a clear space of four feet (4') from the ring posts on all sides.
- (3) Ring posts shall be constructed of metal, shall provide sufficient structural support, shall be properly padded, and shall extend from the floor of the building to a height of fifty-eight inches (58") above the ring floor.

(Rule 0145-02-.02, continued)

- (4) There shall be four (4) ring ropes not less than one inch (1") in diameter. All ropes shall be wrapped securely in soft material, and shall be tightly drawn. The lower rope shall be eighteen inches (18") above the ring floor; the second rope thirty inches (30"); the third rope forty-two inches (42"); and the fourth rope, fifty-four inches (54") above the ring floor.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.03 BELL.

A device capable of producing a tone easily audible to the contestants shall be fastened securely at or below the floor level of the ring.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.04 BANDAGES.

Contestant's hands shall be wrapped with soft gauze bandages not more than three inches (3") in width held in place by not more than eight feet (8') of surgeon's tape one inch (1") in width. The binding of surgeon's tape must not be applied within one-half inch (1/2") of the knuckles of the contestant's hand.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.05 GLOVES.

- (1) Glove weights for each weight classification shall be as provided in the Association of Boxing Commissions' (ABC) Regulatory Guidelines for Weight Classes, Weight Differences and Glove Weight Guidelines, as modified July 27, 2005.
- (2) Ends of glove laces shall be securely taped.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009. Amendments filed July 5, 2017; effective October 3, 2017.

0145-02-.06 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.

- (1) Each boxer shall be equipped with, and use throughout the bout:
 - (a) Equipment which will preclude any claim of incapacity due to low blows; and
 - (b) A custom-made, individually fabricated mouth guard; provided, however, that a referee shall not call time for the purpose of replacing any mouthpiece which is knocked out or dropped during a bout.

(Rule 0145-02-.06, continued)

- (2) Female boxers may wear a breast protector.
- (3) Each referee and all seconds (including a manager acting as a second) shall be equipped with surgical gloves which shall be worn throughout the bout.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009. Amendments filed September 25, 2019; effective December 24, 2019.

0145-02-.07 SHOES.

Shoes shall be of soft material, and shall not be fitted with spikes, cleats, hard soles, or hard heels.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.08 WEIGHT CLASSIFICATIONS.

Bouts shall be conducted in the weight classifications, and with weight differences as provided in the Association of Boxing Commissions' (ABC) Regulatory Guidelines for Weight Classes, Weight Differences and Glove Weight Guidelines, as modified July 27, 2005.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009. Amendments filed July 5, 2017; effective October 3, 2017.

0145-02-.09 SECONDS.

- (1) A contestant in a bout is permitted a maximum of three (3) licensed seconds to assist him between rounds in his corner. A licensed manager may act as a second without possessing a second's license.
- (2) No second shall enter the ring while a round is in progress.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.10 REFEREES.

- (1) Each bout shall be officiated by a referee who is licensed in accordance with Rule 0145-01-.03. The referee shall be responsible for enforcing the provisions of this chapter relating to the conduct of such bout. He shall maintain effective supervision and control over the contest while it is in progress. The referee shall effectively communicate all of his decisions and actions concerning a bout through clear and appropriate signals and/or notifications.
- (2) Prior to the start of a bout, the referee shall:
 - (a) Confirm that the contestants and their seconds possess current and valid licenses issued under the authority of this chapter;

(Rule 0145-02-.10, continued)

- (b) Confirm that a commission representative has inspected and initialed (to denote his approval of) the bandages of each contestant;
 - (c) Examine each contestant's gloves to insure that they are not in an unsanitary, lumpy, rough, or broken condition;
 - (d) Observe the fitting of each contestant's gloves;
 - (e) Ensure that no foreign substances have been applied to the gloves, bandages, protective equipment, or body of the contestants, and that their equipment is in order; and
 - (f) Ensure that all persons working the ring wear surgical gloves.
- (3) The referee may:
- (a) Stop a contest and consult with the ringside physician on the advisability of allowing it to continue;
 - (b) Administer a "standing eight count" to a contestant in order to observe his condition; and
 - (c) Warn, penalize or disqualify a contestant for:
 - 1. Hitting below the belt;
 - 2. Hitting an opponent who is down or is getting up after being down;
 - 3. Holding an opponent with one hand and hitting with the other;
 - 4. Holding or deliberately maintaining a clinch;
 - 5. Wrestling or kicking;
 - 6. Butting with the head or shoulder or using the knee;
 - 7. Hitting with the open glove, or with the butt of the hand, the wrist, or the elbow;
 - 8. Purposely going down without being hit;
 - 9. Striking deliberately at the part of the body over the kidneys;
 - 10. The use of the pivot blow or the deliberate use of the rabbit punch;
 - 11. Jabbing opponent's eyes with the thumb of the glove;
 - 12. The use of abusive language in the ring;
 - 13. Any unsportsmanlike-like conduct or action causing injury to an opponent;
 - 14. Hitting on the break;
 - 15. Hitting after the bell has sounded ending the round;
 - 16. Roughing at the ropes; or

(Rule 0145-02-.10, continued)

17. Pushing an opponent about the ring, or into or through the ropes.
- (4) If a referee has reason to believe that a foul which he did not see may have been committed, he may poll the judges to determine whether such foul was committed. The referee may consider any, all or none of the opinions expressed in making his determination. The referee may, in his sole discretion, ask for a replay, if television equipment is available, before rendering his decision.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. §§ 68-115-201 and 68-115-404.
Administrative History: Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.11 TIMEKEEPER.

- (1) At all bouts there shall be a licensed timekeeper who possesses a whistle and/or some other sound device and an accurate stopwatch. The timekeeper shall be seated outside the ring close to the sound device required by Rule 0145-02-.03.
- (2) The timekeeper shall indicate the beginning and ending of each round by activating the sound device. Ten (10) seconds before the beginning of each round, the timekeeper shall warn the seconds of the contestants by blowing the whistle.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.12 SCORING.

- (1) All bouts will be scored by the “ten-point must” system by a minimum of three (3) judges. In this system the winner of each round receives ten (10) points and the opponent a proportionately less number, but under no circumstances less than seven (7). When the round is even, each boxer receives ten (10) points.
- (2) A referee may participate in the scoring of a bout without possessing a judge’s license. However, it is recommended that the referee take no part in the scoring of a bout in order to devote maximum attention to the proper performance of his supervisory responsibilities.
- (3) Whenever a referee decides to penalize a contestant because of a foul or other infraction of the rules, he shall notify both corners and the judges of the number of points to be deducted from such contestant at the end of the round in which the infraction occurs. The judges shall adjust their scorecards in accordance with the referee’s instructions.
- (4) The scoring of a bout shall be based on four (4) factors, in the following order:
 - (a) Clean hits;
 - (b) Effective aggressiveness;
 - (c) Defense; and
 - (d) Ring generalship.

(Rule 0145-02-.12, continued)

- (5) For scoring purposes, a “standing eight count” shall be deemed equivalent to a knockdown.
- (6) In any bout fought to a decision, the outcome shall be determined by a majority of the scorers.

Example: Two judges score a bout a draw; one judge scores the bout in one boxer’s favor. The outcome is a draw.
- (7) In the event that a bout terminates by a knockout or technical knockout which, in the referee’s sole judgment, resulted from head blows, he shall instruct the judges to enter the designation “KOH” or “TKOH” (as appropriate) on their scorecards.
- (8) At the conclusion of a bout, all scorecards shall be signed by the scorer and transmitted to a designated “chief judge”. After reviewing the scorecards for accuracy and correctness, the chief judge shall notify the ring announcer of the official decision. Following the announcement of the decision, the scorecards shall be delivered to the Directors.
- (9) In order to afford an adequate view of the bout as well as sufficient isolation from other spectators, judges may be seated in elevated chairs positioned midway between the ring posts on different sides of the ring.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.13 KNOCKDOWN AND KNOCKOUT.

- (1) A contestant shall be deemed “down” when:
 - (a) Any part of his body, except his feet, is on the ring floor;
 - (b) He is rising from a down position; or
 - (c) He is hanging helplessly over the ropes; provided, however, that a boxer hanging over the ropes is not officially “down” until so pronounced by the referee.
- (2) When a contestant is knocked down, the timekeeper shall immediately rise and announce the elapsed seconds; and the referee shall promptly order the opponent to retire to the farthest neutral corner. The referee shall then return to the fallen contestant and audibly announce the count as he motions with his right arm downward indicating the end of each second. Should the opponent fail to remain in the neutral corner farthest for the boxer who is down, the referee shall cease counting until he has returned to it, and then continue the count from the point at which it was interrupted.
- (3) A contestant who is knocked down must take a count of eight (8) whether or not he has regained his feet before the count has been reached. If when the count of eight (8) is reached the contestant is on his feet, the referee shall wipe any accumulated resin from his gloves, and may examine him sufficiently to assure himself that the contestant is physically fit and mentally alert enough to continue. If so assured, the referee shall, without loss of time, order the contestants to resume boxing.
- (4) If the contestant taking the count is still down when the referee calls the count of ten (10), the referee shall wave both arms, indicating that the contestant has been knocked out. When a round other than a final round shall terminate while the referee is administering the count to a contestant who has been knocked down, the count shall be continued. The timekeeper shall not ring the bell until and unless such contestant rises before the count of ten (10) and the

(Rule 0145-02-.13, continued)

referee orders him to resume boxing. If the fallen contestant shall fail to rise before the count of ten (10), he shall be declared the loser by knockout in the round just concluded.

- (5) Should a boxer slip, fall down, or be pushed down, he shall be ordered to his feet immediately. Failure to rise may subject him to disqualification.
- (6) A contestant who has fallen through the ropes and out of the platform ring as a result of a legal blow during the contest may not be helped by anyone, and the referee shall start the count, which in this special case will be twenty (20) seconds. Should the contestant fail to re-enter the ring before the count of twenty (20) seconds, the referee shall wave both arms to indicate that he has been knocked out and shall raise the hand of the opponent as the winner.
- (7) If a contestant is knocked down three (3) times in a round, he shall be declared the loser by knockout.
- (8) When a boxer has been knocked out, none of his seconds shall touch him until the attending physician enters the ring and personally attends the fallen boxer, and issues such instructions as he deems appropriate to the boxer's seconds.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.14 TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT.

- (1) The referee shall promptly terminate a bout and declare a "technical knockout" if:
 - (a) He is advised to do so by the ringside physician;
 - (b) In his opinion, the bout is too one sided;
 - (c) In his opinion, a contestant is in such condition that continuation of the bout might subject him to serious injury; or
 - (d) A contestant fails to answer the bell for a round.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. §§ 68-115-201 and 68-115-404. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.15 NO CONTEST.

- (1) If the stoppage of a bout is attributable to any cause other than legal blows (including injuries resulting therefrom), disqualification, or retirement, such bout:
 - (a) Will be ruled a "no contest", if the stoppage occurs before the end of the fourth (4th) round; or
 - (b) Will be decided by the totals on the scorecards, if the stoppage occurs after the end of the fourth (4th) round.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21,

(Rule 0145-02-.15, continued)

2009. *Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.*

0145-02-.16 STIMULANTS.

- (1) No substance other than plain water shall be administered to a contestant during the course of a bout. The discretionary use of petroleum jelly around the eye is permitted; however, the use of petroleum jelly, grease, or any other substance on the arms, legs, or body of contestant is prohibited.
- (2) The discretionary use of coagulants, such as a solution of adrenalin (1/1000) approved by the ringside physician, is permitted between rounds to stop bleeding of minor cuts and lacerations sustained by a contestant. The use of "iron type" coagulants, such as Monsel's solution, is absolutely prohibited, and shall be cause for immediate disqualification.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. §§ 68-115-201 and 68-115-405.

Administrative History: Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.17 TIME LIMITATIONS.

- (1) No bout shall exceed twelve (12) rounds of not more than three (3) minutes each in length. There shall be a rest period of one (1) minute between consecutive rounds.
- (2) The number of days which must elapse before a boxer who has competed anywhere in a bout may participate in another bout shall be as follows:

Length of Bout (In scheduled rounds)	Required Interval (in days)
(a) 4 or less	2
(b) 5 - 9	5
(c) 10 - 12	7

- (3) A boxer who suffers a knockout (KO), technical knockout (TKO) or retires from a fight for any reason shall not be permitted to engage in any further competitive boxing or sparring for a period of at least thirty (30) days. If a boxer loses two (2) bouts by KO or TKO within a period of three (3) months, he shall not be permitted to engage in any further boxing or sparring for a period of at least six (6) months. This rule includes any KO or TKO suffered in an out of state bout. Both the boxer and the boxer's manager shall be responsible for assuring compliance with this paragraph.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative**

History: Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.18 RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES.

In the event a problem or dispute arises in connection with a bout held or scheduled to be held in this State, the parties shall make every effort to achieve a reasonable settlement consistent with the provisions of this chapter. If the parties fail to reach an agreement, and the Commission's administrator or his or her designee determines that a resolution of the matter is reasonably

(Rule 0145-02-.18, continued)

necessary to protect the welfare of one or both of the boxers, then such matter shall be referred to the Commission's administrator or his or her designee for decision.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. §§ 68-115-201 and 68-115-203. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.19 CONTESTANTS OF OPPOSITE SEXES.

Bouts between contestants of opposite sexes are prohibited.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009. Amendments filed September 25, 2019; effective December 24, 2019.

0145-02-.20 FOUL RELATED INJURIES.

- (1) If a boxer is injured by a foul (for which the referee does not disqualify his opponent), both boxers may be seated in their corners for a period not to exceed five (5) minutes. During such period:
 - (a) The boxers shall be neither attended nor talked to by their seconds; and
 - (b) The ringside physician shall examine the fouled boxer and, in his discretion, the other boxer.
- (2) Should the fouled boxer be unable to continue after the rest period, the bout shall be scored in accordance with Rule 0145-02-.15.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.21 BOXER IDENTIFICATION CARD.

- (1) In addition to any other requirements contained in this chapter:
 - (a) Each professional boxer residing in this State shall register with the Commission and obtain a boxer identification card.
 - (b) Each professional boxer shall renew his or her identification card once every two (2) years.
 - (c) The fee for a new identification card or renewal of an existing identification card shall be twenty-five dollars (\$25.00).
 - (d) Each professional boxer shall present his or her identification card to the appropriate regulatory authority not later than the time for the weigh-in for each professional boxing match they enter.
- (2) A professional boxer who is a resident of a foreign country or a state (as defined by the "Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996", Public Law 104-272) in which professional boxing is

(Rule 0145-02-.21, continued)

not regulated may register and obtain a boxer identification card in this state as provided in paragraph one (1) of this rule.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. § 68-115-201. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.

0145-02-.22 FEDERAL STANDARDS.

Each individual or entity licensed or required to be licensed under this chapter shall comply with the "Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996" (Public Law 104-272), any amendments made thereto, and any federal regulations promulgated thereunder.

Authority: Chapter 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008, § 2 and T.C.A. §§ 68-115-201 and 68-115-501. **Administrative History:** Emergency rules 0145-01 through 0145-05 filed November 7, 2008; effective though April 21, 2009. Emergency rule filed April 20, 2009; effective through October 2, 2009. New rule filed March 17, 2009; effective May 31, 2009.